

Message Text

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PAGE 01 HELSIN 01951 220906Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
BIB-01 EA-10 ACDA-12 IO-13 /102 W
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R 210936Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2868

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y TAGS (ADD FI)

3.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, FI
SUBJECT: FINNISH COMMUNIST PARTY CONGRESS REAFFIRMS MODERATE
COMMUNIST LINE BUT INTERNAL DIVISION PERSISTS

1. SUMMARY: THE FINNISH COMMUNIST PARTY'S (SKP) 18TH PARTY
CONGRESS, HELD IN HELSINKI JUNE 1-3, 1978, PRESENTED A
TRANSPARENT VENEER OF FORMAL UNITY. HOWEVER, MUTUAL VERBAL
CRITICISM AT THE CONFERENCE BETWEEN THE MAJORITY LIBERAL
FACTION (278 DELEGATES) AND MINORITY CONSERVATIVE OR "STALINIST"
FACTION (215 DELEGATES) CLEARLY REVEALED A CONTINUATION OF
REAL IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES AND INDIVIDUAL PERSONALITY AND
POWER CONFLICTS WITHIN THE PARTY. END SUMMARY.

2. INTERFACTIONAL CONFLICT AT THE CONGRESS FOCUSED ON TWO
ISSUES: SKP PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT AND A 60TH ANNIVERSARY
DOCUMENT RECOUNTING PARTY HISTORY THAT HAD BEEN DRAFTED BY A
STALINIST-LED COMMITTEE FOR APPROVAL BY THE CONGRESS.

3. THE GOVERNMENT PARTICIPATION ISSUE WAS DELIBERATELY
EXCLUDED FROM THE CONGRESS' MAIN POLITICAL DOCUMENT
ENTITLED "FOR A TURN TOWARD DEMOCRACY" WHICH REQUIRED A
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VOTE OF APPROVAL BY THE CONGRESS (AND WAS PASSED UNANI-
MOUSLY). RATHER, THE PARTICIPATION ISSUE WAS TREATED
AS A SEPARATE MATTER AND NOT VOTED ON; INSTEAD MAJORITY
FACTION DELEGATES WERE ALLOWED TO PLACE THEIR NAMES IN
THE CONGRESS MINUTES AS SUPPORTING THE COMMUNIST-FRONT
FINNISH PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC LEAGUE (SKDL) MINISTERS IN
GOVERNMENT AND THE GOVERNMENT'S OVERALL POLICIES. BY

THUS CIRCUMVENTING A VOTE WHICH UNDOUBTEDLY WOULD HAVE SPLIT THE CONGRESS, A SUPERFICIAL SHOW OF UNITY WAS MAINTAINED. EVEN SO, SPEECHES ON THIS ISSUE BY SPOKESMEN OF THE TWO FACTIONS CLEARLY REFLECTED CONTINUING DISAGREEMENT OVER THIS ISSUE.

4. CONTROVERSY OVER THE HISTORICAL DOCUMENT CENTERED ON ATTEMPTS BY THE STALINIST LEADERS OF THE DRAFTING COMMITTEE TO WHITEWASH THE STALIN YEARS, WHEN THOUSANDS OF FINNISH COMMUNISTS WERE PERSECUTED BY THE SOVIET UNION, AND TO DOWNPLAY THE SIGNIFICANCE IN PARTY HISTORY OF THE 1960'S, WHEN THE MODERATE WING OF THE SKP ACHIEVED ASCENDENCY AND INITIATED A POLICY OF PARTICIPATION IN COALITION GOVERNMENTS.

5. WHEN IT BECAME OBVIOUS THAT EVEN ARTIFICIAL UNANIMITY COULD NOT BE ACHIEVED ON THE HISTORICAL DOCUMENT AT THE CONGRESS, IT WAS DECIDED TO SEND THE PAPER TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE FOR REWRITING.

6. THE CONGRESS REACHED CONSENSUS EASILY ON THE MAIN DOCUMENT "FOR A TURN TOWARD DEMOCRACY," WHICH IN ADDITION TO DOMESTIC THEMES ALSO INCLUDED INTERNATIONAL TOPICS. THE DOCUMENT CRITICIZED CHINESE LEADERS ON SEVERAL GROUNDS, OPPOSED THE NEUTRON BOMB, AND EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR SOVIET "DISARMAMENT INITIATIVE."
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7. THE CONGRESS UNANIMOUSLY RE-ELECTED THE PARTY LEADERSHIP: CHAIRMAN AARNE SAARINEN, 64 (LIBERAL FACTION); SECRETARY GENERAL ARVO ALTO, 45 (LIBERAL; VICE-CHAIRMAN OLAVI HANNINEN, 48 (LIBERAL; VICE-CHAIRMAN TAISTO SINISALO, 51 (STALINIST). SAARINEN ANNOUNCED HE WILL RETIRE AT THE NEXT CONGRESS IN THREE YEARS.

8. REPRESENTATIVES OF SEVERAL FOREIGN COMMUNIST PARTIES ATTENDED THE CONGRESS AND DELIVERED SPEECHES. CPSU POLITBURO MEMBER AND SECRETARY OF THE PARTY'S LENINGRAD (DISTRICT) GRIGORIY V. ROMANOV TOOK A CONVENTIONAL AND NONCONTROVERSIAL LINE IN HIS REMARKS.

9. COMMENTS: THE SKP'S 18TH CONGRESS RECONFIRMED THAT THE LIBERAL-STALINIST SPLIT SHOWS NO SIGNS OF HEALING, BUT THAT AT THE SAME TIME THE LEADERS OF BOTH FACTIONS WANT TO AVOID A FORMAL PARTY SPLIT. THE CPSU APPEARS TO WANT TO ENCOURAGE SKP COHESION TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE WHILE REMAINING OUTSIDE THE CONFLICT TO AVOID CHARGES OF INTERFERENCE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF A FRATERNAL PARTY. NEVERTHELESS, RECENT CPSU ACTIONS AND ATTITUDES

APPEAR TO HAVE STRENGTHENED THE HAND OF THE LIBERALS
AND THEIR LEADER, AARNE SAARINEN. SAARINEN DEMONSTRATED
AT THE CONGRESS THAT WHILE HE WILL NOT GO SO FAR AS TO
IMPOSE "DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM" ON THE MINORITY FACTION,
HE IS INSISTING ON HIS RIGHTFUL DOMINATING ROLE. AIRGRAM
WITH ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THE CONGRESS FOLLOWS.
RIDGWAY

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ACTION EUR-12

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BIB-01 EA-10 ACDA-12 IO-13 /102 W
-----018249 220952Z /10

R 220841Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2874
INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

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FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SECSTATE JUNE 21 REPEATED FOR YOUR
INFO:

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, FI
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PARTY LINE, COMMUNISTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978HELSIN01951
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780262-0824
Format: TEL
From: HELSINKI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780636/aaaabfli.tel
Line Count: 251
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Litigation History:
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Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
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Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags: ANOMALY
Review Date: 04 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2269421
Secure: OPEN
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Subject: FINNISH COMMUNIST PARTY CONGRESS REAFFIRMS MODERATE COMMUNIST LINE BUT INTERNAL DIVISION PERSISTS
TAGS: PINT, FI
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/f78db784-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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